

# The Brethren Evangelist

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AT  
The Brethren Publishing House,  
ASHLAND, OHIO.

## Terms of Subscription.

One Copy one year, \$1.50  
One Copy six months, .75  
One Copy four months, .50

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THE BRETHREN PUB. HOUSE,  
ASHLAND, Ashland Co., OHIO.

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ASHLAND, O., AUG. 25, 1886

## The Argument of Concession on the Love Feast.

The love feast of the Primitive Church was and ordinary meal composed of such articles of food as the different members brought with them when they came together on the Lord's day for the purpose of engaging in devotional exercises, and was at first held in the evening, and concluded with the communion. They were usually kept in the church, and frequently observed; many churches holding them every Lord's day.

As our church literature is not supplied with many testimonies from the writings of learned men, we shall publish a few under the title of "The Argument of Concession on the Love Feast."

William Cave—"Feasts in those days were constantly had at the celebration of the sacrament, where the rich and the poor feasted together at the same table. These were called love feasts, because here at they testified and confirmed their mutual love and kindness, a thing never more proper than at the celebration of the Lord's Supper—Primitive Christianity, page 167.

"It is probable that in the Apostle's time and the age after them, the love feast was before the communion in imitation of our Savior's institution, who celebrated the sacrament after supper.—Same as above, page 167.

"I know a very learned man is of the opinion that these love feasts were not kept at the same time with the celebration of the Eucharist; but besides, that his arguments are not conclusive, the whole stream of learned writers run full against him. These feasts continued for some ages."—Same as above, page 168.

William Cave was a learned English divine and scholar, and the author of several learned works.

Bishop Bloomfield—*Agape*: Those sacred meals, which at first among the Primitive Christians, preceded the Eucharist, and afterward succeeded it, and to which all, especially the richer, furnished their contributions.

This bishop was born in 1786, and presided in London.

Zell's Encyclopedia—*Agape*: The name given to those meetings of the early Christians where they sat and ate, at a common table, of food which had been provided by the voluntary contributions of the members of the society. These love feasts seem to have continued to be generally celebrated for several centuries.

William Bates—"Plineys letter clearly shows that they [the Primitive Christians] celebrated the Lord's Supper and love feast in the evening or night assemblies."—Lecture second of his Christian Antiquities.

The word *Agape* which signifies love or charity, was used to denote a feast which all the full members of the church partook. These feasts were always connected with the administration of the Eucharist, and at first were held before its celebration, but were subsequently celebrated after it. At first they were held in the churches, but the council of Laodicea decreed that they should not be held in the churches.—Remarks on the Laodicean Council.

The chief reason why there was a change in keeping the feast before the communion, was the mystery that was attached to the symbols in the third and fourth centuries. They took the bread and wine before the love feast in order that they might receive the mysteries on an "empty stomach." This was foolish, but they did it nevertheless.

(To be Continued.)

## An Organized Body.

Bro. Bashor gives his opinions of a convention this week. He does not write as a scribe, but as one that knows. His statements, however, are his opinions and judgment, and merit attention.

Our opinion and judgment has been and is yet that a convention would be a grand success and in spirit the cause wonderfully. It can not be a failure although a few worthy brethren are absent gathering in the sheaves of the Lord's harvest. Such conduct would be very meritorious, and if the committee see proper to give us a convention, and Bro. Bashor and Bro. Mallott will not leave their posts on Zion's Walls, we will pass a set of ringing commendatory resolutions as a testimonial of our appreciation of their strong devotion.

This talk about a failure is a kind of brow-beating that our brethren ought not to engage in. If we can not hold a general meeting with two months time to prepare, and make it a success, then we are not as we should be.

Our brother wants a conference intensely official. That sounds very much as though "the logic of the strongest is always the best." He also reminds us that there is an "organized and chartered body." In the present status, that is both a wheel in a wheel and double grand ecclesiastical machinery. That "organized and chartered body" adopted the revised New Testament as its creed—Constitution and By-laws we suppose—and gave us no law of interpretation, and no interpretation. It has not defined the conditions of membership, and given no rules by which new Brethren societies can become a member or a part of that "organized and chartered body." So Brethren churches are organized around that "body" and are no part of it officially. Why are not Brethren churches organized as a part of that body?

We were organized into a church some time ago, and we made our pledge upon a King James Bible. That is a different document from the Revised New Testament, and this church is no part of that "organized and chartered body," because it received no dispensation from that body, and the pledge of union is a different document.

But this does not concern any one who has the Lord's cause at heart.

If we propose to be systematic, legal and official, then let us be so. If we mean to be Brethren, then let us be brethren and not speak about being official, while we are incoherent, unsystematic and as unorganized in our methods of procedure. Well what is the difference? Our aim is heaven and if we reach it, it matters not by whose authority devils are cast out. Christ is master.

As a general church we have no government. In a Convention, consistently, we can be nothing more than congregational, allowing every person presenting evidence of connection with some Brethren church, a voice and a vote in the work, and it will be just as official, as will a company of delegates appointed without any official or legal rule, and by churches that are no part of the "organized and chartered body."

A convention can be successfully held on the principles received and accepted by all the churches, and a convention can be held in no other way for years to come. Any person who has doctrinal questions to spring will wait awhile before he can get a general convention to spring them on, unless there is a radical change in the sentiment of the Brotherhood soon.

Our laws of Christian deportment are complete in the Scriptures.

## California Camp-Meeting.

It has been decided to hold our camp-meeting near the San Joaquin Bridge, 3 miles south-west of Lathrop, commencing Sept. 10th, 1886. It will be held on the pay table plan, but parties who prefer it can arrange to board themselves.

The meeting is to continue over two Sundays. An effort is being made to secure a preacher from the east, and we hope to succeed. It is intended to hold a general council for the Pacific coast Brethren during the meeting, and all who can attend are invited.

J. W. BEER.

## NOTES AND NEWS.

We can answer S. C. M. when we know who he is.

When last heard from Bro. Holsinger was at Terra Alta, W. Va.

Bro. A. A. Cober writes very encouragingly of the work in his charge.

Bro. A. J. Sterling will take charge of the Johnstown church, Oct. 1st, next.

Bro. Mason was at North Star last week, and from the way he wrote, he is having an interesting time.

The Sister's fund did not increase any the past week; this is possibly a calm before a storm—of dollars.

Sister Fultz, our worthy College janitor's wife, has been visiting in the southern part of the State the past week.

We opened the forms to get in Brother Beer's notice about the California camp-meeting, as another week's delay would have made it useless.

Married by Wm. W. Summers of North Manchester, Mr. Wm. H. Sanderman to Miss Dora F. Dillion both of Grant co., Ind.

It is now almost September 1st. Ministers do not forget to send in your report for the Annual. Please attend to this at once.

Bro. Wm. Summers writes that things are moving along pleasantly with encouraging prospects, and reports another addition to the church.

Next week we will publish an answer to inquiries regarding the posture of the applicant in baptism, in the Greek Church, by Eld. James Chrystal.

Bro. Bashor's health is improving, and we are in good hopes that he will be able to do vigorous work in the revival field this fall and winter.

Bro. H. F. Hixson and others have founded a Normal and Business School in Parsons, Kansas. Sister Hixson and Sister Anna Arnold are members of the faculty.

The Brethren of Berrien congregation, Michigan, will hold a communion Sept. 14th, at New Troy. All are cordially invited. Address A. J. Ingleright Berrien, Michigan.

We are now well equipped to do circular, tract and catalogue printing at the lowest prices, and if any of our readers have such work to do, we would be glad to give estimates.

The S. S. at Coventry, Pa., held a picnic on the 7th, and had a very enjoyable time. Addresses were delivered by Joseph Harley of Brooklyn, New York, and Hon. Eli Stiffler, of Lewisburg, Pa.

Last Lord's day was an "off time" for the church here. Bro. Bailey and family chose it to attend services in the country; and brother J. Shoemaker and wife were away to see relatives, and a camp meeting near this place was attended by others.

The Pennsylvania brethren will notice brother Knepper's article regarding the S. S. Convention for that state. Berlin is an interesting place in Brethren church history, already, and let it be more so at the close of the S. S. Convention.

We now have some twenty articles awaiting publication, suitable for the inside. This is more than has been on hand at any time since we have been connected with the paper. But they will not last long, so continue to put your best thought upon paper and send it in.

One dollar does not seem to be very much money, but if every member in our church would now contribute one dollar to Ashland College, every cent of indebtedness would be cancelled, and a nice sum would remain to be devoted in broadening the educational work among us.

We have been watching the reports of accessions made by other religious denominations, and the per cent of increase in the Brethren church is very much greater than in any other we have noticed. The accessions during the year commencing and ending Sept. 1st, next will aggregate about two thousand souls.

The S. S. lessons these Lord's days treat of the manifestation and constancy of Christ's love during the last hours of his life. When in great heaviness and with the knowledge of his approaching death, his love never withdrew from his own dear ones—he loved them to the end. May God enable us all to approach the example of the good Master in the constancy of our love for him and for one another.

We would urge upon our National Committee promptness in action regarding the Convention. If we are to have one, then the sooner it is known, the better; if not, then let the subject be dropped. But, whatever is done, the fact remains that a convention this fall would greatly strengthen many of the laborers in the field, and inspire the cause with new life and energy, and result in a better understanding of our relation to one another.

Bro. R. Z. Replogle has resigned his charge at Johnstown, Pa., and expects to give his attention to business. He says, however, that he will preach on Lord's days where needed. We wish it was possible that our ministers could be independent of business cares, but it can not be so now except in a few instances. We believe it is proper for ministers to labor some, but they ought to be free of cares that demand their constant attention and application.

Brethren pray that divine favor may rest upon the efforts of Brethren Pullen, Bashor and Beer to establish the Lord's cause in Oregon. New countries are excellent fields in which to plant the Brethren standard. If our doctrine is first established in new settlements and put in the hearts of the settlers, a work will be accomplished that will continue. People, when they know a reasonable and New Testament religion will not readily exchange it for one that is not in harmony with the Gospel.

A brother desires to know whether we have any tracts for free distribution. We can only answer, No. We have facilities here to print tracts at extremely low prices, but when we are building up a business these hard times with about half a dozen other institutions to help to manage which takes time and pay no money, we cannot possibly afford to buy paper and ink, employ labor, and pay postage on tracts for free distribution. We are willing to do this if we could, but we can not now. If we had a hundred dollars to spend in this way we could sow the country full of useful tracts. We have material laid up for tracts on baptism, the love-feast, foot-washing, conversion and other subjects which could be used to a good advantage, if there was means to work it up. Well, we hope and pray that this may be accomplished in God's own good time.

We tender our thanks to Bro. D. S. Miller for a beautiful lamp designed for my study. May a long and happy life be his to enjoy.

WM. W. SUMMERS.

Maurertown, Va.

At our regular appointment Sunday, there were two appli-